

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 3-7 previously presented for examination remain in the application.

Claim 2 has been canceled without prejudice. No claims have been amended.

New claims 30-40 have been added. Claims 8-29 were previously cancelled as being drawn to a non-elected invention, but may be pursued in a divisional application.

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being considered to be anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,492,855 to Pasqualini ("Pasqualini").

Applicants respectfully submit that Pasqualini cannot properly be used as an anticipatory reference since Pasqualini was filed on September 10, 2001, over 5 months after the filing date of the present application of March 29, 2001, and provides no indication of an earlier priority date.

For at least this reason, applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Claims 3-4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being considered to be unpatentable over Pasqualini in view of the admitted prior art of Figure 1.

As discussed above, Pasqualini may not properly be applied as a prior art reference. The admitted prior art alone does not teach the claimed features of applicants' invention.

For at least this reason, applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Claims 5-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being considered to be unpatentable over Pasqualini in view of the admitted prior art of Figure 1 and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,037,824 to Takahashi ("Takahashi").

As presented above, Pasqualini may not be properly applied as a prior art reference. The admitted prior art and Takahashi, alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the claimed features of applicants' invention.

For at least this reason, applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.


Based on the foregoing, applicants respectfully submit that the applicable objections and rejections have been overcome, and claims 1, 3-7 and 30-40 are in condition for allowance. If the examiner disagrees or believes that further discussion will expedite prosecution of this case, the examiner is invited to telephone applicants' representative Cynthia Thomas Faatz at (408) 765-2057.

If there are any charges, please charge Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

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